

**PUBLIC HEARING RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION SCRIPT
(FOR PROJECTS WITH RELOCATION)**

Detailed information on Right-of-way Acquisition and Relocation Assistance may be found in this *(color)* brochure. *(Hold it up)* I will just highlight what the brochure contains.

It is the Department's objective to pay just compensation for all properties required for the project. Owners of required properties may be contacted by an appraiser or appraisers and given the opportunity to go with them on the inspection of the property. This will provide owners an opportunity to point out things that may be important to the evaluation of the property.

After the evaluations have been reviewed by a review appraiser and approved by the Department, a Real Estate Agent will contact each property owner. He will present a letter setting forth the amount of the Department's cash offer for the purchase of the property. He will also explain the property value and discuss any alternate offers including possible options to keep and move any buildings, fencing, etc.

In addition the Department will have an Agent contact all families and businesses being displaced by this project to explain relocation assistance. Relocation Assistance includes advisory services and payments. Advisory services shall include current and continuing information on the availability and prices of comparable, decent, safe and sanitary dwellings, comparable commercial properties and locations for displaced businesses; supplying information concerning finance charges, Federal and State programs offering assistance to displaced persons.

Relocation assistance payments are separate and in addition to payments made by the Department for the purchase of your property. These are moving expense payments and replacement housing payments, and business re-establishment expense payments.

Moving expense payments will be made to any individual, family, or business, in legal occupancy of the property either at the start of negotiations or at the time of purchase by the Department.

The amount of the payment to residential displacees will depend on actual costs supported by receipts, or a fixed cost based on room count. More detailed information is available beginning on Page 29 of the brochure.

Displaced businesses, farms and non-profit organizations may be paid the actual, reasonable expenses of moving, together with certain eligible costs incident to the move. Some businesses may also be eligible for certain actual costs incidental to re-establishing their businesses. Instead of payment for moving expenses, some business owners may be eligible to receive a payment based on the average annual net earnings of the business. If the business meets the qualifications, this payment shall not be less than \$1,000.00 nor more than \$20,000.00. Moving payment information for businesses may be found beginning on Page 33 of the brochure.

Replacement housing payments are also available to qualifying owners and tenants. Three of the basic requirements are as follows: First, you must be occupying the property at the start of negotiations; second, you must have been there at least 90 days; and third, you must move into decent, safe, and sanitary replacement housing. The amount of your maximum supplemental payment will be given to you in writing. Additional requirements and payment limits may be found beginning on Page 43 of the brochure.

Certain owners and tenants not in occupancy for at least 90 days or who become occupants after negotiations have started may qualify for replacement housing payments. Two of the basic requirements are that you must have been in occupancy at the time the property was acquired by the Department and you must move into decent, safe, and sanitary replacement housing.

Applicants for a relocation payment have the right to appeal the Department's determination of their eligibility for payment and/or the amount of payment. Appeals must be submitted to the Real Estate District Officer within sixty days after the applicant has been notified that his claim has not been

approved. Final decisions on eligibility and payments will be made by the Department's Real Estate Administrator in Baton Rouge. Additional information on appeals may be found on Page 52 of the brochure.

To the greatest extent practicable, no person lawfully occupying real property shall be required to move without at least 90 days written notice from the Department. The notice will indicate the specific date the property must be vacated. No person lawfully occupying a dwelling will be required to move unless, and until, comparable, decent, safe and sanitary replacements housing is made available within the general area of the project. The replacement housing must be available within a reasonable time prior to the scheduled move of the occupants, and must be within the occupants' financial means. Replacement housing must be fair, open and offered to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

Prior to the Department's negotiating for purchase of your property a District Real Estate Agent will personally contact and interview all persons who will be required to relocate. The benefits will be explained and a determination made of individual needs and intentions for relocating. If you do not have the brochure explaining the Department's Acquisition of Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program, they are available at the table at the door or can be obtained from District *(number)* Real Estate Office, *(address)*, telephone number *(phone)*. We suggest you read the brochure carefully and if you have any questions regarding your individual situation, consult with the agent when he meets with you, or contact him at the District Real Estate Office.

A SPECIAL WORD OF CAUTION - Before moving or purchasing replacement housing, contact the Department to assure your eligibility and the prompt payment of your relocation benefits. If you move without prior notification to the Department, you risk losing all possible benefits provided by the Relocation Assistance Program.

I will be available at the recess and the conclusion of this hearing to answer any questions pertaining to Right of Way Acquisition or Relocation.

THANK YOU